

Abstract

THESIS: Measuring Environmental Perceptions and Sense of Place in Franklin County, Florida

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Franklin County, Florida is widely perceived as one of the last unspoiled areas on the Gulf Coast. This study examines the historical geography, economic activities and socio-cultural aspects of the area which contribute to the construction of sense of place values among residents and visitors. The commodification of nature emerged as a consistent theme of this research from the timber and seafood industries to real estate development and tourism. This study uses both qualitative and quantitative techniques to analyze environmental perceptions and sense of place intensity. Results provided an opportunity to compare the two methods and to identify key factors contributing to the construction of sense of place. Informants perceived that the areas unique way of life linked to the natural environment played an important role in sense of place and personal identity construction.